

In the claims:

For the Examiner's convenience, all pending claims are presented below with changes shown in accordance with the mandatory amendment format.

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
  
a parser to receive packets and to generate packet search requests;  
  
a plurality of search resources, each search resource to determine a search response based on the packet search requests;  
  
a switch to receive the packet search requests from the parser and to transmit the packet search requests to the plurality of search resources; and  
  
a session memory coupled to the switch to store session identifiers associated with each packet, the session identifiers to enable the switch to transmit the packets in a session based on associated session processing rules,  
  
wherein the parser compares identifier data received in the packets with the session identifiers stored in the session memory to determine if the identifier data matches a stored session identifier.
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the switch is further configured to receive a search response from each of the plurality of search resources, to select one search response from the received search responses, and to transmit the selected response to the parser.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the parser is further configured to generate a modification requests for the packets based on the search response.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 3, further comprising a plurality of packet modifiers, each packet modifier configured to modify the packets using the modification request.

5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the switch is configured to transmit the modification request from the parser to a packet modifier having a shortest queue.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the switch is further configured to transmit the modified packet from the packet modifier to the parser.

7-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

first means for receiving packets and to generate a packet search requests;

second means for generating a packet responses based on the packet search requests;

third means for receiving the packet search requests from said first means and for transmitting the packet search requests to said second means; and

fourth means for storing session identifiers associated with each packet, the session identifiers to enable a switch to transmit the packets in a session based on associated session processing rules,

wherein the fourth means compares identifier data received in the packets with the session identifiers stored in the session memory to determine if the identifier data matches a stored session identifier.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the packet search requests are selected from the group consisting of: ; packet modification requests, and session identification requests.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said third means further comprises means for receiving a packet responses from said second means, and for transmitting the packet responses to said first means.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the packet responses are selected from the group consisting of: search responses, packet modifications, and session identifiers.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said second means is selected from the group consisting of: a packet modifier, a packet search device, and a session device.

17. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:  
receiving packets at a parser;  
generating a packet search requests at the parser;

using a switch to transmit the packet search requests from the parser to a plurality of packet resources;

storing session identifiers associated with each packet, the session identifiers to enable the switch to transmit the packets in a session based on associated session processing rules; ~~and~~

using the plurality of packet resources to generate a packet search response based on the packet search requests; and

comparing identifier data received in the packets with the session identifiers stored in the session memory to determine if the identifier data matches a stored session identifier.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the packet search requests are selected from the group consisting of: packet modification requests, and a session identification requests.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising using the switch to transmit the packet search response from the plurality of packet search resources to the parser.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the packet search response is selected from the group consisting of: a packet modification, and a session identifier.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the plurality of packet resources are selected from the group consisting of: a packet modifiers, packet search devices, and a session devices.

23. (Cancelled)